



PRESS RELEASE

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33rd Standing Bilateral Commission in Lisbon Defines Bilateral Agenda

Over 20 persons from the White House; the Departments of State, Defense, Commerce, and Homeland Security; the U.S. Air Force, and the U.S. Navy, including many senior officials, joined U.S. Ambassador to Portugal Robert Sherman for meetings with the Portuguese government February 11 in the 33rd U.S-Portugal Standing Bilateral Commission. It was the largest-ever U.S. delegation for this event.

The Standing Bilateral Commission covered a broad agenda of issues of mutual importance, and the U.S. and Portuguese delegations agreed to strengthen bilateral economic, political, defense, law enforcement, cyber, and cultural ties, including through high-level political-military discussions. Participants highlighted ongoing collaboration as well as new agreements and initiatives, building on the strong and enduring bilateral relationship between the United States and Portugal, to address 21st century challenges.

On strategic, defense, and law enforcement collaboration, the Commission underlined the importance of addressing regional and global security challenges, including in Ukraine, Syria and Iraq (DAESH and foreign fighters), Afghanistan, and Iran. Participants addressed cooperation in NATO and engagement in Africa, to include maritime security in the Gulf of Guinea. The Commission discussed opportunities to generate greater trade and investment, including the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (T-TIP), Connect to Success, and an upcoming Life Sciences Trade Mission to Portugal. The Commission reaffirmed its commitment to science, technology, energy, and environment (STEE) as well as education, and the countries signed a Fulbright agreement to expand educational exchanges.

The United States appreciates the long-standing relationship between the U.S. military at Lajes Field and the people of Terceira island and recognizes the socio-economic impact the streamlining at Lajes will have on the Azores. As such, American officials will join their Portuguese counterparts in intensified consultations aimed at ensuring the decision to streamline the U.S. presence at Lajes is implemented as thoughtfully as possible. The United States reaffirmed its commitment to maintain and expand relations with the Azorean people in the fields of business, science, defense, education, and culture, and participants identified priorities and opportunities for collaboration and partnership to support the efforts of the regional and central government to spur economic development efforts in the Azores.

Press outlets interested in receiving more information should contact the Press Section of the Embassy of the United States of America, at 21 770 2439 or by e-mail to MorenoMV@state.gov.
